

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A positive resist composition comprising:

(A) a resin having a monocyclic or polycyclic alicyclic hydrocarbon structure, which increases ~~the~~its solubility in an alkali developing solution by the action of an acid;

(B) a compound capable of generating an acid upon irradiation with an actinic ray or ~~a~~ ^{actinic} radiation; and

(C) an alkoxy alcohol as a solvent, wherein an alkoxy group and an alcoholic hydroxyl group are connected to each other via at least three carbons,

wherein the resin (A) comprises a repeating unit having an alkali-soluble group protected by a 2-alkyl-2-adamantyl group or a 1-adamantyl-1-alkylalkyl group.

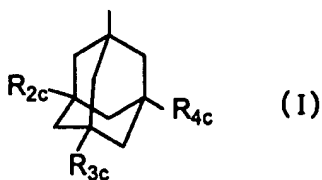
2. (original): The composition according to claim 1, wherein the solvent (C) further contains a propylene glycol monoalkyl ether carboxylate.

3. (original): The composition according to claim 2, wherein the solvent (C) contains from 10 to 50 % by weight of the alkoxy alcohol and from 50 to 90 % by weight of the propylene glycol monoalkyl ether carboxylate.

4. (original): The composition according to claims 1, wherein the alkoxy alcohol is 3-methoxybutanol.

5. (original): The composition according to claim 2, wherein the propylene glycol monoalkyl ether carboxylate is propylene glycol monomethyl ether acetate.

6. (original): The composition according to claim 1, wherein the resin (A) comprises a repeating unit having a group represented by the following formula (I):



wherein R_{2c}, R_{3c}, and R_{4c} each independently represents a hydrogen atom or a hydroxyl group, provided that at least one of R_{2c}, R_{3c}, and R_{4c} represents a hydroxyl group.

Claim 7. (canceled).

8. (currently amended): The composition according to claim 1, wherein the compound (B) is a compound capable of generating a ~~perfluorobutanesulfonic~~ perfluorobutanesulfonic acid or a perfluorooctanesulfonic acid upon irradiation with an actinic ray or a radiation.

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9. (original): The composition according to claim 1, wherein the alkoxy group and the alcoholic hydroxyl group are connected to each other via from 3 to 10 carbons.

10. (original): The composition according to claim 1, wherein the alkoxy alcohol has a boiling point of from 120 to 220 °C.

11. (previously presented): The composition according to claim 1, further comprising (D) a nitrogen-containing basic compound.

12. (previously presented): The composition according to claim 1, further comprising (E) a fluorine based and/or silicon based surfactant.

13. (original): A method for forming a pattern, which comprises forming a resist film comprising the composition described in claim 1, exposing the resist film upon irradiation with the actinic rays or a radiation, and subsequently developing the resist film.